

glacier and gray

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She topples off the cliff and expects the waves of the ocean to sweep her away. Not to wake up in a room full of gold and a great white dragon standing before her.

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Chapter 1

Chapter 1

A red blur flashes amongst the trees.

Ice-blue eyes track crimson as the girl runs through the overgrowth, pushing past branches and bushes until she finally stops by the cliff, boots skidding on the ground. A small army of police has her surrounded, guns cocked and ready to fire at any given moment. She grins, sweat running down the side of her head, hand gripping a sack of apples.

"Whoops..."

"Hand those over right now, thief!" one of them cries, making a clicking noise with his gun to emphasize his point. "We will not hesitate to shoot!"

"I c'n see that..." her gray eyes flicker from the ground to behind her to the police, then back to the ground again - the steep cliff wall or the armed police? She clearly isn't sure which one to take her chances with. "Let's see... give over good food or die tryin'..."

A little laugh escapes her throat, and then the black-haired thief tumbles off solid ground.

When Ruby can see clearly again, she finds herself in a cave.

It's a very clean cave, for starters. There's no water dripping from the ceiling, like most other caves she's hidden in, and all the rocks and boulders have been cleared. There are narrow shafts of light from the ceiling, just enough to make the place look absolutely breathtaking. How so?

There are piles of gold. *Everywhere* .

Ruby barely suppresses a whoop, scrambling to stand upright. A couple of clinking coins shake themselves loose from her cape, revealing that she had been laying down on one of the smaller piles of gold. Now that she takes a look at that pile, it looks like it was shaped to make a comfortable bed, or as comfortable as a bed made out of gold coins could be...

But the question remains: how did she get here? Moreover, who brought her here? While she's on a thinking spree - where *is* here?

Growl.

She jumps. Ruby eyes the area cautiously, before slowly making her way behind one of the larger piles, hoping to hide herself behind it. Another low growl sounds, making the red-caped thief stumble on her boots, trip over a small mound of gold, and create a long, loud sound of the swishing noise of coins over coins. The sound is deafening in the cave's echoing silence.

Growl. Hissss.

'Aw, *what the hell...* ' Ruby ducks behind the gold properly this time, looking around as much as she could. '*Are there tigers and snakes here or somethin'?* '

There is what seems like the shuffling of feet - paws? Claws? - and some coins clinking against each other before one of the most majestic creatures Ruby has ever laid her eyes upon emerges from out of nowhere.

Gleaming white scales with red lining its long neck, glacier blue eyes, a swirling tail that curls and uncurls almost hypnotically - it makes Ruby's head all muddled up. Her thoughts are a veritable mess.

And then she realizes *exactly* what she's looking at - a large, scaly reptile with a long neck, a pair of magnificent wings - a dragon.

Ruby's breath hitches. Her heart jumps to her throat. Her gray eyes nearly split themselves apart widening.

A dragon .

The glimmering white creature makes a sound like a huff, craning its neck around as if looking for something. Its gaze goes over to where Ruby had been lying down just minutes before, expression confused - or as confused as a dragon could look.

"Are you here, human?" a voice breathes. Ruby blinks - the dragon couldn't have *talked*, could it? It was a *dragon*, and, well, it was still technically an animal, and animals couldn't talk -

A sound that might have been a draconic sort of scoff. "I'd prefer you not refer to me as a lowly animal. I am near the status of a *god*, you must know."

"Eep!" the red-caped girl trips over a particularly trip-able pebble and falls flat on her face, coins jingling, almost as if they were laughing at her. When Ruby awkwardly picks herself back up, the dragon is staring at her, a smirk playing on its lips.... What? "Are you *laughing* at me?"

The smirk disappears, quickly replaced with a very believable scowl. The dragon turns away, and Ruby frowns slightly. "I assure you, you mortals aren't worth paying attention to. Why I even brought you into my lair, I wouldn't know..."

"Wait, *you* brought *me* here?" Ruby gawks, looking around at the cave once more. "That's way weird! I remember falling off that cliff, and then-" she pauses. "... *You* caught me?"

"I'm seeing I shouldn't have, now, as you're being so ungrateful about it." The dragon's scowl deepens. "Would you rather you had broken your spine on those rocks? We can arrange that right now, though we can replace the rocks with my teeth."

"Uh, no, no thank you, I still gotta live for a while 'fore I die," Ruby stammers, backing away from the very huffy dragon. "Um, why'd you bring me here, dragon?"

"I have a *name* ."

"Well, why don't you tell me?"

"It is rude to ask someone of their name before you introduce yourself," the dragon scoffs. Its head has turned to face the girl again, though, ice blue eyes glaring into her soul. A closer look reveals there's a thin, barely-there scar running down the dragon's left eye, marring its otherwise perfect hide. She vaguely wonders where it had come from.

"Um, name's Ruby. Ruby Rose. Nice t' meet you?" Ruby grins unsurely.

The dragon scrutinizes her for a while, eyes narrowed to slits, making Ruby very uncomfortable. Eventually, the dragon relents, and says, "You may address me as Weiss Schnee. Be honored that you have made my acquaintance, human."

"Hey, if I'm going to call you 'Weiss', then you should call me 'Ruby', too!" Ruby exclaims, pointing at the dragon rather boldly. She opens her mouth, as if to say something, before pausing and closing it again. Then, "Do dragons have genders?"

"Of course we do!" Weiss flares up. "How do you think we r-reproduce?! I am a *female*, for that matter!"

"Dragons can blush too, okay," Ruby says cheekily, finding the thought of teasing a dragon hilarious. "Hey, but you didn't answer my question! Why'd you bring me here?"

Weiss 'hmp'h's, then curls her tail around her as she takes a seat, belly flat against the ground, somehow looking very regal as she did so. "You were in trouble."

"I didn't think a dragon, especially a dragon like *you*, would help out a 'lowly mortal' like me." Ruby blinks. "Or am I just gonna be someone to fetch you stuff?"

"That's exactly it," Weiss says in a very matter-of-fact tone, head held high. "Nothing more, nothing less. I saw your decent stealing skills, and I supposed it would be useful for more gold to beautify my lair with."

"Beautify?" Ruby repeats incredulously, scouring the cave for the third time since she had woken up. "You don't need any more gold, this place is great enough as it is. Hey, would you mind if I got juuust a little...?"

"Absolutely *not!*" Weiss almost roars, her voice reverberating throughout the cave. Ruby flinches, cape fluttering slightly behind her by the sheer force the dragon exerted. "I will never allow a mere mortal, especially a hooligan like *you*, to ever lay their filthy hands on my precious gold! Let the day wherein you will ever set your sights upon my treasures be forever in the deepest, darkest crevices of your nonexistent brain!"

A whimper.

Ruby dares to look up, silver eyes flashing a multitude of shades as a shaft of light caught her face. Her face practically screams 'please don't hurt me, I'm sorry, I won't do it again', and that is when Weiss' vocabulary that exceeds a hundred thousand words fails her. "I - I -"

It is *extraordinary* to hear a dragon stutter.

"Sor'y," Ruby mumbles, her gaze flashing downwards once more, too frightened to look up at the dragon's glacier blue eyes. "Won't... Won't say it again... didn't think..." she pauses, hiccups once. "Sorry."

Weiss looks down at the girl before her, the girl who she had saved from falling off a cliff, the girl who she had revealed herself in front of

humans before in the first time in centuries, the girl she had *helped* - and she crumbles.

"A... A little won't hurt," the dragon mutters, sighing slowly, laying her head down on her claws and watches the red-caped girl smile.

Ruby does not bring a little of gold back home.

Ruby does, however, bring a lot of gold back home.

She did not expect Weiss to just about shove a pile of sparkling coins in her face and order her to bring it home and sell it or she would end up in the dragon's stomach. That was certainly not what Ruby had been going for. Mostly, she had just wanted to get out of the cave alive and not in a million pieces chewed up by the snow-white dragon's teeth.

The gold was an added bonus, she felt.

Yang was blown off her feet when Ruby brought the gold back home, most of it shoved in her pockets, a few in between her breasts, and the rest carried in her arms. She had wrapped her cape around her body to make it look like a cloak and ran all the way home before anyone could think otherwise. She had almost asked Weiss for a ride back to town, but decided that was most probably going a bit too far.

"This is amazing!" the blonde had cheered, wrapping her arms around her younger sister and squeezing the caped girl half to death. "We're going to be rich! *Rich!* Ruby, sis, you're the best person anyone could ever ask for!"

"Yeah... uh... sure... just please let go of me," Ruby wheezed.

She was more or less just glad the question of where exactly she had found the gold didn't come up.

That night, Yang bought two boxes of pizza - honest-to-goodness *pizza*, who knew how long ago any of the two sisters had had pizza - and they both ate to their heart's content. Ruby was vaguely reminded that she had no idea where her sack of apples had gone, but decided that if she had left them back at Weiss', then the dragon could enjoy some nice apples tonight. Maybe she'd think about the human girl she had helped out, too, because Ruby was definitely thinking of the dragon when she lay in bed.

"I wouldn't trade this in for the world," Yang had declared through mouthfuls of pepperoni pizza, and Ruby could not help but agree. Not vocally, though, because she was afraid everything in her mouth would spray onto her sister's face if she dared speak. There was a nod of consent, though, and the blonde had grinned and patted her on the back, so the general message was understood.

And now, as Ruby lies in bed, under a thin sheet of scraggly fabric, her gray eyes remained locked on the cracked ceiling, thoughts of the mythical dragon Weiss swirling in her mind. Her eyes as deep and as blue as the ocean, her ivory scales that glittered and glimmered in the light, the piles of gold that just added to the gorgeous splendor Ruby had seen -

Oh God, is she dreaming up fantasies of a dragon? Ruby sighs, turns to her side, tries to think of different thoughts -

"Thinking of me?"

Ruby very nearly screams. If it isn't for her sister sleeping in the bed right next to her, the girl would definitely have shrieked the whole town awake. Had that been a *voice*? In her *head*? With no one else but Yang in the room?

She quietly smacks her cheeks with both hands. *'Alright, Rubes, you're just sleepy, you need some rest...'*

"I am not a hallucination, I can assure you." The voice comes again, causing Ruby to turn once more, her back facing the ceiling and

burying her face in her pillow. The weird voice gave her a headache. *"Would you reply, at least? I'd eat you for ignoring me if I were there right now."*

'Weiss?' Ruby blinks, sitting up slightly.

"Yes, *this is me*, " the voice - Weiss' voice, Ruby realizes now - says, sounding rather disgruntled. *"Only took you a million and a half years to figure that one out."*

"Wow, *the dragon's using sass!* " Ruby giggles mentally, though also wondering if she's doing this telepathy thing right. The dragon's abilities were all so new to her. *"Er, can you hear me?"* she says, trying again, this time focusing a little harder on communicating to Weiss.

"Yes. " The dragon's voice pauses. *"There's just a little trouble here."*

Ruby blinks. She sits up properly this time, eyebrows scrunched up in concentration. *"How much trouble is a little trouble?"*

"Not enough for you to worry." Weiss snorts. *"I know what you're feeling, human. Really, sirens are annoying, but tolerable."*

"Sirens?" The raven-haired girl jumps to her feet, now completely alert. Sirens meant... the police? *"Weiss, you said you came out of nowhere to catch me and then flew off, right?"*

"Yes... why?"

'*Shit. Shit, shit, shit.* ' In a flash, the raven-haired girl grabs her shoes and her cape, throwing on a sweatshirt over her tank top while she's at it. No time to waste getting nice and pretty for the dragon - Weiss is in definite danger. *"Are dragons feared by humans?"*

"Considering past events... yes," Weiss growls, and Ruby can feel the irritation emanating from the dragon. *"What is with the annoying*

questions? Are sirens really that bad? "

After fumbling with her shoes, Ruby grabs her trusty backpack and a knife, just in case, and stumbles over to the door. She pushes it open, not bothering to close it, knowing that by the time Yang wakes up from the draft, Ruby would be long gone. *"Sirens mean the police, Weiss! You revealed yourself in front of police, that means they're gonna - Weiss? "*

The dragon doesn't respond. There's a faint sound of static at the back of Ruby's head.

She curses, vocally this time, and sprints as fast as her legs can take her all the way back to the forest.

Back at Ruby and Yang's house, the door swinging open, the blonde sighs and sits upright, sweeping some hair away from her lilac eyes. Yang eyes the quickly-disappearing figure of her sister, then smiles. *"Blakey, I think my little sis has it under control... "*

"... Well, of course, you can still go there. "

Ruby is no fool. She's a thief at heart, and a thief never forgets a place they had stolen from before. Granted, no thief had ever made friends (or acquaintances, as Ruby is sure Weiss would insist on) with a dragon and gotten loads of gold from them, but that's beside the point.

The red-caped girl follows the path she's sure she had taken only hours before, and once she finds herself at a loss for where to go, she hears the long whine of sirens somewhere to the north. She picks up the pace and starts tracking the sound down, intent on finding them. If they did *anything* to Weiss, Ruby would... would... she doesn't quite know exactly what she would do to them, but she at least knows that it's nothing pleasant.

Finally, she reaches a curve in the path that feels familiar, and once Ruby looks up, she spots Weiss' cave - *lair*, her mind reminds her. The dragon would probably not appreciate her royal lair being referred to as a simple cave. The sirens are much louder from here, too, she notices, and that's probably not a good sign...

Hold on, are the sirens getting *fainter*?

The red-caped girl ducks into the cave and navigates through the narrow passageways, calling out futilely for the dragon again and again, even using the strange telepathy Weiss had used, but no reply ever came. Finally, she comes across the room where she's sure Weiss stores most of her gold -

It's empty. There's nothing in there, not even a single coin left.

Ruby is dashing out of the cave before she knows it. Her legs are screaming, her thighs are sore, and she can feel the blisters erupting on her toes, but she can't stop. Weiss had saved her life, once, and if Ruby had a chance to return the favor, then she would.

She follows the sirens and hopes the glimmer of white will return to her, somehow.

And, finally, when she reaches the police cars, sirens deafening in the dead of night, she sees not a dragon, but a girl lying down on the back of a truck.

Seventeen years old, flowing white hair tied in an off-center ponytail, white dress with a cute little jacket, arms and legs bound by ropes - her eyes are closed, but Ruby can feel the girl staring at her with ice-blue eyes.

"Weiss?" she breathes, too surprised, too taken aback by this strange girl she's sure must have been a dragon not too long ago, that she lets her guard fall, just a bit - and then she finds herself at gunpoint.

The cars stop. Multiple men and women dressed in blue step out, armed with guns and pistols and whatever else Ruby can't name. She has no idea how anyone heard her, but she can't dwell on that now, because she has her life to think about at the moment.

"Hands in the air!" the man aiming at her snaps, jabbing his gun closer to her chest. Ruby complies immediately, arms shooting up so fast at a speed she didn't know she could achieve. The man grunts, shouts something she can't hear to the other policemen, and they drag her over to the back of a car.

Snap. Click.

Handcuffs. Hah - no problem. She knows her way around these.

"Human... I, I mean, Ruby? "

The red-caped girl jumps. *"Weiss? Weiss, are you okay, did they hurt you? "* She would jump up and down in joy at the sound of her name in the dragon's voice, but now isn't exactly the right time for such celebrations.

"... They shot me. I don't think I can revert to my draconic form until the effects of that dart wears off... while I'm weakened considerably in this state, I believe I can still fight efficiently. Could you... "

"I just need t' distract 'em, right? " Ruby hums. She's gotten her hands out of the handcuffs already, stuffing them in her bag as quietly as she can. *"I have the following: a gun, two pencils, some moldy bread, a knife, an eraser I thought I lost way long ago, and my clothes. What to do? "*

Though she can't really hear it, Ruby knows that if Weiss were talking directly to her, the dragon-girl would be stammering. *"I - You - "*

"Aw, relax, princess, I'm a true-blue thief! " she grins, careful not to let the police at the front see her. Her spirits had been lifted

considerably when she saw that Weiss was at least somewhat unharmed and that there was a chance they could both get out of this mess. *"I do this all the time. Just leave it to me and you can do your thing!"*

"If... If you say so, then." The dragon-girl would surely have scoffed, and Ruby would surely have smiled, if there wasn't the problem of distance and police between them. *"Well, then."*

Before any of the three police at the front could react, Ruby had knocked the both of them out with fists at the back of their heads. Though she isn't as strong as her elder sister, her strength is enough for the two men in front of her, and they both fall to the ground with choked yelps and cries. The driver's gaze flickers up to the back mirror, spotting the red-caped girl's lazy grin, curses, nearly swerves off the road -

"Aw, mist'r, you're a horrible driver," Ruby says, laughing, as she kicks the doors to the back open and jumps out, before leaping over to the car holding Weiss' humanlike body. Ruby cuts the ropes off with her knife in one clean swipe, and the dragon-girl sits up. Her eyes are glimmering with hints of amusement and slight exasperation, and Ruby knows that Weiss had been watching her. "How d'ya like it?"

"It was... satisfactory," the dragon-girl says, crossing her arms and forcing a scowl on her face. Ruby grins a little, spying the faintest curl at the edge of Weiss' lips as she continues, "Well, shall we go?"

"Whenever you're ready, Weiss," Ruby replies all too cheerfully, swinging her knife like a serial killer escaped from the mental hospital. Weiss sighs, then conceives a swirling ball of mist in her hands, eyes narrowed dangerously as she scours the area, ignoring Ruby's surprised yelp and stumble. The police had abandoned their cars and had gathered around them, guns aimed and ready to fire, much like how Weiss had first seen Ruby...

Weiss pushes her arms forward, the mist ball crackling and exploding into icicles as they slam against the various policemen, sending them crashing to the ground. She's sure the icicles aren't too sharp, aren't too cold, are just the right sharpness and temperature to send them out of commission for long enough for the two of them to get away safely. Without acknowledging Ruby's look of shock and awe, the dragon-girl grabs her hand and dashes back into the forest. The gold can wait until she can go steal it back in her draconic form - right now, Ruby is more important.

The red-caped girl squawks as Weiss' supernatural speed pulls her forward, but she quickly adapts and does her best to keep up with the dragon-girl, almost impressed at herself for managing the task. Weiss doesn't slow down, not one bit, not until they're both inside the cave, in the once-golden room and hopefully safe for now. Weiss, through pants and heaves, shoves the boulder she uses as a gate in front of the gold room, locking the police out.

Ruby looks like she's barely hanging on, which is a rather accurate description for her - keeping pace with a dragon, no matter how 'weakened' Weiss might be, is no easy feat. The red-caped girl drops to her knees, gasping for air as she attempts to recollect her breath. Weiss watches, her breathing gradually winding down to normal inhales and exhales, and then she, too, falls to the floor, knees pulled up to her chest, and *sighs* .

She was almost killed. She could have *died* if it hadn't been for the little thief who had, perhaps, stolen her heart along with her gold.

Weiss falls asleep rather quickly.

She wakes up with a bright red blanket resting atop her. No, it isn't a blanket, it's a...

Weiss stands up shakily, still not quite used to human legs. The cape falls to the cave floor, looking hauntingly familiar...

"Ruby?" she murmurs, mind not working properly in the early morning. When no reply comes, however, Weiss lifts her head up slightly, looking around at the empty cave chamber. "Ruby...?"

She looks behind her. The boulder had been replaced by a giant... black... thing.

No, not a thing, it's...

"Blake?" Weiss sighs. Of course the feline dragon had to pay her a visit... "Blake, wake up." She tapped her knuckles on the dragon's scaly forehead, Blake's head resting on her forepaws. "Blake?"

Blake grumbled something indiscernible, before she finally opened one amber eye, pupil narrowed to a slit, much like how a cat's would. "Good morning, Weiss."

"Yes, yes, you too, now-"

"Your friend is currently out." Blake yawned. "She'll be back soon, don't you worry. I believe she is retrieving something right now..."

Then the dragon abruptly falls back asleep.

Weiss blinks in disbelief, before shaking her head. Leave it to the feline dragon to fall asleep in the middle of speaking... though she isn't narcoleptic, she sure acts like she is sometimes. "Whatever. I suppose..."

Then, as if on cue, there was a loud, high-pitched voice from behind Blake. "Weiss! I'm back! Oh, Blake, could you let me pass, pretty please?"

The dark dragon muttered something none too gentle under her breath, but shuffled to the side slightly, allowing Ruby to walk in the cave chamber, followed by a tall blonde with enormous assets and bright lilac eyes. The new arrivals made Weiss' head hurt. Ruby, however, brightened up considerably. "Weiss! Weiss, guess what, I

got you something! Well, a lot of somethings, actually, but you know what I mean, right? Right! So, like-"

However, before the red-caped girl could continue, the blonde whistles and leans in to look closer at Weiss, eyes wide and rather appreciative. "Damn, sis, when you told me she looked good, I didn't think she'd look *this* good!"

Both red and white flush pink. Ruby yells, "Yang!" at the same time Blake cracks an eye open and glares halfheartedly at the blonde. Yang grins, pats Weiss in a more... friendly... manner, and retreats back to Ruby's side. "Just playin'!"

Weiss clears her throat, still feeling the blood in her cheeks, and awkwardly gestures for Ruby to continue.

"E-Erm, right! So you know how those stupid police got all that gold I know you love? I got it all back for you! Down to the last coin and all!" Ruby's grin nearly splits her face in two. Then it falters, just a little bit. "Well, okay, maybe not *all* of it, 'cause Yang might've nicked a coin or two, but I promise I got everything I could find and if you want, I'll get Yang to give what she got back to you-"

Weiss can feel her jaw slowly unhinging itself. "You - You got-"

"It was way hard carrying it all here," Yang remarks offhandedly. "But Blakey has connections like that monkey and his blue friend, so we got it back in the end." She shrugs. "Didn't get any of that gold, swear on my boobs."

"The same boobs you're hiding those coins in right now?" Ruby asks, deadpan, and the blonde is behind Blake in a flash. "Oh, no, you don't, get back here, give it back to Wei-"

"It's fine!" the dragon-girl blurts out before she can stop herself, then immediately regrets it when all three females turn to look at her - even Yang, though she can't see the blonde, she knows the lilac

eyes are watching her somehow. "I mean - you can keep it. So long as it wasn't too much. But, my gold, did you really..."

"Yeah, it was so cool!" Ruby cries, jumping up and down in place, looking like a child on Christmas morning. Her hand shoots down to grab Weiss', the red-caped girl leading her outside to where she presumes the gold is situated. "Here, here, look at it-!"

Indeed, right outside the cave chamber are the piles and piles of gold Weiss had guarded for decades. She can spot Blake's monkey friend patting a brilliantly blue-scaled dragon at the side, but she can't really care for much else, because her gold is here, her treasures are still here, and no human is ever going to touch them again.

... Well, perhaps except *one* specific human, but *only* Ruby, and not anyone else -

She turns to the red-caped girl by her side, speechless for the second time in those twenty-four hours, mouth opening and closing like she's a fish out of water. "I - Ruby - I-"

"Are you gonna say 'I don't know how to thank you'?" Ruby grins, teeth showing and all, and then brings Weiss into a hug. The dragon-girl can't even think straight anymore, by this point. "'Cause you don't need to thank me, you saved my life once, it's only proper I pay y' back..."

Weiss hesitates, arms lifting up from her side like she's not sure what to do with them, before wrapping them around the human girl before her and allowing herself to succumb to the touch. "... 'S gonna take a while to fix everything up again..."

She can just *feel* the smile that she's sure is occupying Ruby's face once more. "If there's anything we've got, it's time."

Chapter 2

Chapter 2

Weiss "socializes". A secret is revealed.

well hey y'all wanted a continuation (this was posted much, much earlier in FFN)

"Really," Weiss grumbles. "Do I have to be here?"

"Come on, Weiss!" Ruby laughs, throwing her head back. "This'll be a great training regimen for you!"

"How is *this* a *training regimen* ?!" The dragon-girl all but screeches, gesturing to the shops around her. "This is a mall, isn't it?! A place where all you humans go around socializing and buying pointless items?!"

"Actually, Yang and Blake are shopping for food right now, which I don't think is 'pointless'," Ruby points out. "Also, this is helping you to build up your social skills! As a dra... ahem... very reclusive person, you have to learn how to talk to others besides me!"

"The problem is that I don't *want* -" Weiss pauses. "... Don't want to talk to anyone else except you..."

Ruby almost squeals. She turns it into a squeak for the public's sake. "You're so cuuuute, Weiss!" The red-caped girl practically pounces onto the dragon-girl, wrapping her arms around her in her trademark hug. "I'm happy you like me that much, but when you want money, you need t' *talk*, too! Also, it'd be a problem if people started

suspecting you..." She sighs. "I'm not letting last time happen ever again."

Looking around, it's obvious Weiss' snow-white hair stands out like a sore thumb amongst the sea of black, brown, and blondes. It doesn't help that her hair looks completely natural, and not through old age, either. Several people have been staring for quite a while, most of them children, a few adults who sneak glances at her every now and then when they thought she isn't looking. Of course, Weiss can see practically everything that went around her, used to observation. Such was the gift of an experienced dragon.

For now, though, she is simply just a girl. A normal, human girl with a normal, human friend. Or... *is* Ruby a normal human? Weiss thought...

No, it wouldn't do to ponder on that now. Of course Ruby is a human - she looks human, she smells human, she has normal human capabilities -

"But really, how does she keep up with Weiss, every time she went flying, or..."

"Weiss, Weiss, you there?"

Blinking blue eyes, Weiss is met face-to-face with Ruby's childish face, sparkling gray eyes staring up at her -

The dragon-girl screams, stumbles, and ducks into a hair salon in an effort to fight the blood rushing up her face.

After a few minutes of half-hearted attempts at hiding from Ruby, the dragon-girl eventually finds herself being dragged out of the mall and into some strange, flashy place.

"Where on this planet are we going?" Weiss asks, a note of irritation entering her voice.

"A bar! Yang comes here all the time!" Turning around, the red-caped girl flashes her a blinding grin. "There're a lot of people here, so this'll definitely help you!"

"If you say so," Weiss grumbles.

The bar they're entering is near to completely filled with people, either stumbling around drunk, making out in some corner of the place, or babbling incoherently about everything and nothing. As Ruby skips into the doors, Weiss trailing behind her, a few loud greetings are made and before she knows it, Ruby's shoved a glass in Weiss' hand. There's some sort of swirling liquid in it that stank quite a lot. "Ruby, what..."

The red-caped girl is nowhere to be found. Weiss almost curses, but decides that she was a lady and struts off to the front of the bar, where the counter is located. There're several drunken people, men and women alike, slumped over the wooden counter or downing glass after glass of whatever the strange liquid is. "Excuse me, sir," she calls, trying to get the barkeeper's attention.

"What is - oh, well, what's a pretty lady like you doing here?" The man, small and scruffy and smelling like he had bathed in a tub of that liquid, asks, flashing her a crooked smile. Weiss notes the man's yellowed teeth with disdain.

"I am wondering what this strange beverage is." She points at the glass she held in hand. "My friend bought it for me and she left me, so now I have no idea what to do next."

The man looks at her, eyes wide and unbelieving. He remains silent for some time, staring at Weiss long enough for her to start getting uncomfortable. She makes to leave, setting the glass on the counter, but the man suddenly speaks up. "That is *beer*, little lady. You go into a bar and you don't know what beer is?"

"I *do* apologize for my ignorance," Weiss huffs, her patience growing thin insanely fast. "I've just never been to a bar before. I'm a very..."

reclusive person, you must know."

The man guffaws, opening his mouth so wide Weiss can smell the stench of beer and possibly some other liquid in his breath. "Rec-klu-siv, y'don't say! Some'un wh' d'n't know what beer is - you're hilarious, little lady!"

Weiss snarls, feeling very tempted to morph into her draconic form and show the man exactly just how 'little' she really is. While she is flattered the man refers to her as a lady, she's starting to suspect he hadn't meant it as a compliment. "If you will..."

However, her voice is drowned by the man's bellow of "Boys!" and by what sounds like the roaring stampede of half a million elephants. Weiss winces, closing one eye as she looks around her once more. Several people similar to the barkeeper, both in smell and appearance, had gathered around her, bearing malicious grins that Weiss knows most definitely meant trouble.

"Who are you all?" She asks, standing up as tall and straight as she can, puffing out her chest and crossing her arms. Weiss tries to stare the few of them down, but proved a bit too... lacking in human height to do it. It's always so much better in her draconic form...

Speaking of which, she was running out of Aura. Her human form is made for disguise, for use that doesn't exceed more than a few hours. Her scales are popping up underneath her long sleeves, too...

"One of the men sneers down at her. "Who's this? Never seen 'er 'round 'fore. She new?"

"Very," the barkeeper chortles. "She don't even know what beer is!"

A near synchronized chorus of laughter erupts from the group. Fuming, Weiss lets her temper run wild for just a little while and swings her leg towards the nearest man, hitting his thigh straight-on. The man's laugh is cut off, replaced by a yowl of pain. Is that...

Oh, no.

Her Aura really was running out.

The man stares in shock at the thin sheet of ice that had grown over his thigh, icicles already sprouting out. Hacks and gasps escape him, and Weiss flinches, knowing the ice must have started flowing through his veins already -

"What the hell?!" One of the men shouts. Turning to her, he yells again, "What the fuck did you do to him?! What the hell are you?!"

"Are those fucking scales on her face?!" The barkeeper cries, stumbling backwards and crashing against a shelf filled with glasses. One falls and shatters on the floor.

Weiss' hand instinctively shoots up to her cheek. Indeed, there is a patch of scales growing, already starting to spread over her nose. Her fingers curl in, her nails growing sharper -

"Ruby!" Weiss blurts out, stumbling backwards, eyeing the small circle of men, before turning around completely and scouring the packed bar for her only friend. "Ruby, where are-"

"Oh no you *fucking* don't, you bitch!" A man snarls, leaping towards her and grabbing her off-centered ponytail. Wrenching it towards him, he growls down at her, "You're gonna pay for that - and for his hospital bills!" Fist raised, he swings it down, Weiss' hands are frozen by her sides -

There's a blur of red and black, and quite suddenly, the man has flown across the bar and slammed against the wooden wall. The building trembles. Ruby stands in front of the dragon-girl, cape flowing almost dramatically behind her. The raven-haired thief looks completely nonchalant about what she had done, as if she threw grown men around all the time.

However, that casual expression is lost immediately as she swivels around to face Weiss, kneeling down to plant her hands on the snow-haired dragon-girl's trembling shoulders. "Weiss, Weiss, are you okay? I'm so so sorry, I forgot that-"

"Shut up and take me outside," Weiss interrupts, staggering to her feet, her knees knocking together. When Ruby doesn't move from her spot, like she's rooted to the floor, Weiss adds, softly, "*please* ."

And all of a sudden, they're back in Weiss' lair.

How?

How had that happened?

Teleportation is not, and will never be, a trait of the dragons nor the humans. Not even in dire situations will anything like that crop up. Weiss did not activate teleportation. So that only left...

The regal white dragon paces back and forth in her lair, careful not to rouse the dozing Ruby by the corner, leaning against a pile of gold as she snores away, shifting every now and then. Weiss watches her, staring at the thief intently as if she would wake up and tell her everything she wanted (which may or may not include those six words) if she stared hard enough. Of course, that doesn't happen, but Weiss remembers that vampires had some degree of hypnosis -

Vampires.

Oh, no, no, *no* .

After making sure Ruby isn't going anywhere, Weiss crawls out of the gold room, covers it with the boulder-gate as best as she can, and with a burst of her wings, flaps high into the sky and dives towards the nearby forest.

"Blake!" She roars, landing lithely near Blake's hollow. There's a low rumble before the midnight black feline dragon emerges from the hollow's hole, amber eyes drooping sleepily. Honestly, every time Weiss sees the feline dragon, she's always sleeping. Winter isn't even coming soon. "Blake, I need your help with something."

"Relationship advice?" Blake mumbles. "I wasn't expecting the great Weiss Schnee to succumb so quickly to love."

"Wha - ?! It's not love! It's not even like!" Weiss fumes. "It's just - just friendship!"

"If you say so," Blake responds, her lips quirking upwards slightly. Yawning a bit, she continues, "So, if it's not that, then what?"

"Is Ruby a human?" Weiss blurts, and immediately starts berating herself for being so blunt - that manner is definitely not what is to be expected of a Schnee. If she had wanted to be blunt, she at least could have been more...

"Weiss?" Blake cocks her head to the side, bringing Weiss back from her train of thought. "You were overthinking your speech again, weren't you? Honestly, it's not that big of a deal. Anyway... your question?"

Weiss sighs. "I asked if Ruby is - is a human." It feels horrible, doubting her first human friend, but it's something that has to be done - or so she tells herself.

Blake hums. "If you want her to be."

"Give me a straight answer," Weiss grunts.

"Straight answers only come from straight individuals," Blake replies, shrugging as if to say leaning towards the same gender is no problem at all. "Perhaps you should talk to Jaune."

Weiss almost laughs. Almost. "I should probably just ask Ruby. Goodbye, Blake, thank you for your time." She beats her wings once, twice, and is soaring through the air once again.

"What makes you think Ruby has a straight answer, especially for you?" Blake mumbles, ducking back into the shadows of her hollow as she places her head back onto her folded forepaws.

"My lil' sis ain't straight at all," Yang says, grinning as she rests her head against Blake's ebony hide. Blake hums in return, her amber eyes closed as she falls back to sleep.

Weiss stares at the smiling human (?) before her. "R-Ruby, I, uhm..."

"Is this a confession?!" Ruby suddenly exclaims, jumping in excitement. "Weiss, Weiss, I'm only fifteen! I can't-"

"Quiet down for two seconds!" Weiss snaps, and Ruby is quite immediately sitting back down on the pile of gold, still smiling brightly. The dragon huffs; she hadn't even seen Ruby sit back down... high speed and agility is another common trait among...

"I-I have a question," Weiss mutters. "Ruby. A-Are you... a..." She trails off, not able to finish her thought.

Ruby smiles wryly. "I'm not a common mortal, if that's what you're asking, Weiss."

"... Oh," the dragon articulates.

"I-Is it okay? Can I keep going?" Ruby stammers, sounding panicked. At Weiss' numb nod, she babbles on, "I'm a vampire, I think. I mean, of course, yeah, I'm a vampire, it's why I go around with that hood an' cape everywhere outside and how I'm super strong and why I'm really fast and stuff. I-I'm really - *shit*, I'm sorry, Weiss, I'm sorry I never told you, b-but I just, I just thought you'd hate me for it because, because of the vampire terrorist groups - I'm

so, so sorry, I really promise I won't go near you anymore if you don't want, even if it'll hurt a lot, I won't be your friend anymore if you don't want me to be, but I just gotta say that I *really really like you* and oh my shit what?" The red-caped thief gasps, hands flashing to her mouth in some inhumane speed, further emphasizing her higher-than-average speed, even for a vampire. "I-I mean! Uh, I... you know... uh."

"Normally," Weiss says slowly, forming each word very carefully. "I would have cut your blabbering off with a kiss, but I'm not exactly a human either. Or, at least, look human."

Ruby stares up at the dragon with a mix of what looks like awe, and embarrassment, and adoration, and surprise, and maybe a million other emotions rushing through her face, but then eventually settles on adoration. "Weiss, you are perfect."

"The dragon snorts, trying to hide the blush she's sure is growing on her snout. "Hardly."

"I mean, I was kind of expecting you to start spewing profanities at me when I told you about that." The red-caped thief grins. "Can we like each other, by the way?"

"I do not spew profanities. I enunciate them clearly and properly, like a fucking lady." The dragon's stern expression falters at the sight of Ruby's bright face and at the sound of her cheery laughter. "And... And, yes, I think we can like each other."

"So, Weiss, uh... how was the training regimen?"

"You're lucky I did not reconsider dating you after that."

"H-Hey... you still like me, right?"

"That remains to be seen."

"Weiiiiss..."